

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS, Nannette Rodriguez
Tel: 305.673.7575, Fax: 786.394.4149, E-mail: nrodriguez@miamibeachfl.gov

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 9, 2012

Miami Beach Announces Hispanic Heritage Month Award Winners

-- Hispanic Heritage Festival is October 12, 6PM, North Shore Park Youth Center --

Miami Beach, FL -- The City of Miami Beach Hispanic Affairs Committee will honor Miami Beach's Hispanic community leaders at the city's annual Hispanic Heritage Month Festival that will be held on **Friday, October 12**, at 6:00 p.m. The event will be held at North Shore Park & Youth Center, located at 501 72 Street, Miami Beach.

The Hispanic Heritage Month Award honors Hispanic individuals who have made a difference to the Miami Beach community. Each of the awardees is actively involved in fostering positive change in the community through involvement in civic and/or professional activities. This year, the Committee honors the following individuals in their respective categories:

Mark Causey (public safety)

Miami Beach Police Captain Mark Causey has been the recipient of many departmental awards through the years and an active member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). In 1997, he won the Civil Rights Award. As a caring philanthropist and neighborhood captain, his actions show he cares for the community he serves.

Bryant Del Toro (employee)

His charisma and musical talent brings joy to hospitalized children on a volunteer basis. He also serves as a role model and motivator to the children he coaches at the City of Miami Beach Parks & Recreation Department.

Samuel Karkassoni (youth)

As an honors student, he launched Project Pathway to Life that collects funds to purchase duffle bags and toiletries for foster children that reach the age of 18 and are displaced from foster care. He currently attends school full time while working full-time to support himself and his twin brother who live on their own.

Richard Martinez (education)

A fifth grade teacher at North Beach Elementary, Martinez has a special skill to reach and motivate students that have language barriers. He also teaches extracurricular sports and recently was able to move to Miami Beach to be near the school that he cherishes.

Mara Mignardi (social services)

As a job developer and case manager at UNIDAD of Miami Beach, Mignari has been instrumental in changing the lives of hundreds of senior citizens by training and placing them in jobs that not only serve as a financial source but also as a psychological boast too.

Bea Pernia (artist)

As singer, writer and actress, Pernia has proudly represented and promoted Miami Beach in many international galas and festivals including Miami Beach Music Festival, Funkshion Miami, Ultra, Fashion Week in Milan, Peru Fashion Week, and numerous film and television productions including "Er conden 007 Bond," "Vive la Vie," and Burn Notice" over the last 10 years.

"Hispanics are a powerful voice on Miami Beach," said Ceci Velasco, chairperson, Miami Beach Hispanic Affairs Committee. "And the winners exemplify the values that we most cherish - integrity, professionalism and a true caring for the community in which we live."

The Hispanic Affairs Committee serves as a vehicle for responsible persons to utilize and consult with, in attempting to understand and resolve the concerns of the Hispanic community, and make recommendations to the City Commission.

###

To request this material in accessible format, sign language interpreters, information on access for persons with disabilities, and/or any accommodation to review any document or participate in any city-sponsored proceeding, please contact 305-604-2489 (voice) or 305-673-7218 (TTY) five days in advance to initiate your request.